

Members

Sen. Marvin Riegsecker, Chairperson
Sen. Rose Antich-Carr
Rep. Sheila Klinker
Rep. Robert Alderman
Suda Hopkins
Sally Lowery
Ervin Picha
Joanne Warner
Thomas Van Meter
Betty Williams
Sylvia Marie Brantley
Christopher Durcholz



INDIANA COMMISSION ON MENTAL RETARDATION AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

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MEETING MINUTES¹

Meeting Date: August 26, 2003
Meeting Time: 1:30 P.M.
Meeting Place: State House, 200 W. Washington
St., Room 130
Meeting City: Indianapolis, Indiana
Meeting Number: 2

Members Present: Sen. Marvin Riegsecker, Chairperson; Sen. Rose Antich-Carr;
Rep. Sheila Klinker; Rep. Robert Alderman; Suda Hopkins;
Sally Lowery; Ervin Picha; Joanne Warner; Thomas Van Meter;
Betty Williams; Sylvia Marie Brantley.

Members Absent: Christopher Durcholz.

1. Call to Order

Senator Riegsecker called the meeting to order at 1:40 P.M.

2. Discussion of 317 Plan

(a) Steve Cook, Director, and Ms. Kristen Schunk, Director of Fiscal Services of the Division of Disability, Aging, and Rehabilitative Services (DDARS) Family and Social Services Administration: Mr. Cook provided the Commission with an update on

¹ Exhibits and other materials referenced in these minutes can be inspected and copied in the Legislative Information Center in Room 230 of the State House in Indianapolis, Indiana. Requests for copies may be mailed to the Legislative Information Center, Legislative Services Agency, 200 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2789. A fee of \$0.15 per page and mailing costs will be charged for copies. These minutes are also available on the Internet at the General Assembly homepage. The URL address of the General Assembly homepage is <http://www.ai.org/legislative/>. No fee is charged for viewing, downloading, or printing minutes from the Internet.

the implementation of the 317 Plan. (Available from the Legislative Information Center as Exhibit 1) (Exhibit 1 consists of Mr. Cook's report with attachments A through M.) Mr. Cook asked **Mr. Ervin Picha, Noble Centers**, to provide the members with information on three of the clients of Noble who benefitted from programs implemented under the 317 Plan. (Available from the Legislative Information Center as Exhibit 2) Commission members were very complimentary about the progress that has been made to date in implementing the 317 Plan.

There was discussion as to what happens if persons are placed in community settings and while there require crisis intervention. There is one ten-bed facility for such situations. If that is not sufficient care, the regular commitment process must be used. Mr. Cook stated that crisis intervention is one of the areas where more needs to be done. The system needs to help develop more crisis intervention in the residential facilities.

There was a great deal of discussion on the need for publicizing success stories. Mr. Cook indicated that one of the things which needs to be done is to gain a better understating of the number of persons in the correction system who could be better served by the MR/DD system. Expanding self-advocacy is another area where more needs to be done. Additionally, the concern was expressed that while moving to community settings, the State must not forget to provide programs for the profoundly disabled. Mr. Cook responded that many of the persons who were placed outside Muscatatuck were in the profound group, and that works if the proper services are created in the community.

There was also discussion on the impact of budget cuts. Mr. Cook said that the Division was looking at things like having roommates for persons in group homes and residential settings as well as other cost saving procedures which would not have a detrimental impact on clients.

(b) Mr. John Dickerson, The ARC of Indiana: Mr. Dickerson said that the State needs to be careful in making budget decisions so that cuts do not undermine the success of 317 implementation. The success so far lies in that the programs have received bi-partisan support which has allowed momentum to be maintained. Mr. Dickerson introduced **Mrs. Frances Piatt** after showing a filmed clip on the progress her son has made. Mrs. Piatt's forty-six year old son had been on a waiting list for services for years, and because of 317 funding, he is now receiving services and has made real progress.

Mr. Dickerson expressed concern that the Division reverted twenty-six million dollars. He also indicated that about two hundred fifty families a year are going to face the need to turn to the community for services due to the death of care givers. Giant strides have been made on quality assurance. Also, giving choices on where to live has improved greatly. Future challenges include raising the wages of the workforce to foster stability with care givers. Due to budget cuts, about half of the money set aside for raises for care givers is no longer available for that purpose.

He identified interaction with the corrections system and the issue of dual diagnosis as items remaining where progress must be made. Mr. Dickerson recognized and thanked many persons for working to improve the system.

3. Discussion of First Steps

(a) Ms. Lanier DeGrella, First Steps Coordinator: Ms. DeGrella updated the Commission on the activities of the First Steps program over the last year. (Available from the Legislative Information Center as Exhibits 3 and 4) There was discussion concerning the new co-pay provisions in the program. Ms. DeGrella reported that nineteen families

had ceased using services since the co-pay was instituted and that one family had refused services because of it. It is still quite early to assess the total impact of the new co-pay requirements. It is also early to determine exactly how much implementing and administering the program will cost in relation to the collections.

Over the past year, they have pursued a system to collect private insurance to pay for services. Problems have arisen with the willingness of insurance companies to deal with the program and recognize First Steps providers as appropriate payees. Ms. DeGrella said that the outcome evaluation process which began November 1, 2002, has been well received to date. As the number of children has increased, the agency has been looking at regional coalitions to take some of the burden off the counties. So far, the ninety-two counties have established thirteen clusters.

In answer to questions about what other states are doing concerning co-payments, Ms. DeGrella said that she will forward studies to the Commission members along with information on the progress of collecting co-payments in Indiana.

(b) Mr. John Dickerson, the ARC of Indiana: Mr. Dickerson said that the average cost per child in First Steps has been declining as the communities have built more capacity to provide services. In answer to questions, Ms. DeGrella reported that sixty percent of the First Steps money is state funding.

4. Other Business

Ms. Terri Hively, Representing County Homes: Ms. Hively reported that the issues previously addressed by the county homes have been solved in a positive manner.

5. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be September 29, at 1:30 P.M., in Room 130 of the State House. At that meeting, the Commission will consider interaction between the MR/DD system and the criminal justice system.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 P.M.